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**Testimony by Janice Heggie Margolis
Executive Director for MADD Connecticut**

**To Members of Committee on Judicial
March 28, 2012**

Raised House Bill No. 5553

**"An Act Concerning the Use of Ignition Interlock Devices in Motor Vehicles for DUI
Offenders Convicted for a 3rd Violation/4th Conviction"**

Good Afternoon. My name is Janice Heggie Margolis, and I am the Executive Director of Mothers Against Drunk Driving Connecticut. I want to thank you for holding this Judiciary Public Hearing. I appreciate the opportunity to testify before you, and I hope together we can pass sound legislation that will preclude injuries and deaths and preserve Connecticut lives.

I have come before this committee today to ask that you consider HB # 5553, An Act Concerning Substance Abuse, include language for mandating immediate Ignition Interlock Device installation for DUI offenders convicted for a 3rd violation, 4th arrest.

MADD strongly supports ignition interlock devices as statistics show that as many as 50-70 percent of DUI offenders continue to drive while their drivers' licenses are either suspended or revoked. Current Connecticut IID law calls for driver's license revocation for 10 years with reapplication after six years. There are approximately 4,000 repeat DUI offenders convicted in CT each year – of these, approximately 850 are 4th offenders – who will continue to drive with a suspended driver's license. MADD is extremely concerned about the number of offenders who simply drive while suspended if interlocks are not required (because they quickly discover how easy it is to drive unlicensed and undetected.) A long delay between a licensing action and ignition interlock installation teaches offenders that they do not need a license to drive and decreases their incentive to ever re-enter the licensing control system. The duration of the interlock use is another issue to be considered, it is suggested that anything less than five years for 4th offenders is recommended. MADD respectfully requests strengthening the current Connecticut IID law in the following way:

- **Require and mandate an immediate 5 year IID use for all convicted 3rd violation/4th arrest drunk drivers.**

Studies by federal agencies and independent think tanks highlight the high rate of recidivism associated with drunk driving. Interlocks have been shown to deter drinking and driving in both a specific and general sense. DUI offenders using interlocks have acknowledged the device's change in their behaviors; we should too.

I look forward to answering any questions you may have. I thank you again for inviting me to appear before your committee.